

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 307

By Herron

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor the late Mary Cordelia Beasley Hudson upon her distinction as the first woman to vote in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to especially remember those trailblazing citizens of our State who, through unwavering courage, faith, and devotion, improved the quality of life for their fellow citizens and for the generations to follow; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable person was Mary Cordelia Beasley Hudson, who held the distinct honor of being the first woman to vote in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, born in Benton County on August 1, 1851, Mrs. Hudson was the daughter of Reuben Beasley and Elizabeth Brown; and

WHEREAS, she married O.B.C. Hudson on January 9, 1872; she and her husband had six children and operated a grocery store near their home; and

WHEREAS, on April 15, 1919, the Tennessee General Assembly passed a limited suffrage act and the newly elected governor, Albert H. Roberts, signed the bill into law two days later; and

WHEREAS, a municipal election was held in Camden on April 22, 1919, and Mrs. Hudson, a renowned advocate of women's rights, was the first woman in line, thereby becoming the first woman to vote in the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, in 1920, Tennessee proudly became the deciding state in the ratification of the 19th Amendment, ensuring women nationwide the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, although Mrs. Hudson passed away before being able to cast her vote in a presidential election, she had certainly seen her vote count in Benton County, where it was reported that she voted for the winner of that election; and

WHEREAS, a public-spirited citizen of the highest order, Mrs. Hudson was wholly committed to the noble cause of women's suffrage; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor the late Mary Cordelia Beasley Hudson for her distinction of being the first woman to vote in the State of Tennessee, recognize her many contributions to Benton County and this State, and fondly reflect upon her impeccable character and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.